

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 NIC-01 ACDA-05 /071 W

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R 211330Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 168

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION USBERLIN UNN

S E C R E T BERLIN 6180

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: GE, US, PFOR

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION WITH STOPH

1. AS PART OF THE FORMAL CEREMONY IN WHICH I PRESENTED MY CREDENTIALS ON DECEMBER 20, AT 11 A.M., I MET WITH THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, WILLI STOPH, THE COUNCIL'S SECRETARY EICHLER, AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GRUNERT.

2. THE MEETING LASTED 30 MINUTES AND PROCEEDED IN AN EASY, COMFORTABLE STYLE ON BOTH SIDES. STOPH IS HANDSOME, A GOOD CONVERSATIONALIST, ASSURED, SMILES, LAUGHS, AND SHOWS A SENSE OF HUMOR. NONE OF THE OTHER GDR REPRESENTATIVES MADE ANY COMMENTS. THE TALKS WERE CONDUCTED THROUGH GDR INTERPRETER.

3. STOPH OPENED OUT MEETING BY STATING THAT THE GDR WAS VERY GLAD TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES, NOTING THAT WHILE GDR AND US HAVE DIFFERENT GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEMS HE CONSIDERED THE TWO COUNTRIES COULD ESTABLISH GOOD RELATIONS AND THAT IT WAS THE PURPOSE OF THE GDR TO DO ITS PART IN THIS ENDEAVOR. COURTEOUSLY, HE SAID THAT GDR APPRECIATED MY APPOINTMENT BECAUSE OF BOTH DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL EXPERIENCE.

4. HE FOLLOWED THE THEME I HAD EXPRESSED IN MY WRITTEN STATEMENT

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SENT TO HIM DECEMBER 19 THAT BOTH COUNTRIES HAD MUTUAL INTERESTS

AS EXPRESSED IN SEPTEMBER 4 AGREEMENT AND THE DESIRE FOR PEACE.

5. I RESPONDED BY THANKING HIM FOR HIS WELCOME, STATING THAT WHILE I DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS RESULTING IN THE SEPTEMBER 4 AGREEMENT I HAD BEEN INFORMED BY THE SECRETARY THAT NEGOTIATIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF REASON AND CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORTS ON BOTH SIDES TO REACH AGREEMENT. I NOTED THAT THIS IMPORTANT, FACT, FOLLOWED BY THE EVIDENCE OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO DCM IN ARRANGING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF EMBASSY, AFFIRMED HIS STATEMENT OF GDR PURPOSE OF ESTABLISHING GOOD RELATIONS, WHICH WAS U.S. PURPOSE.

6. ELABORATING ON HIS REFERENCE TO GDR DESIRE FOR PEACE, HE EXPRESSED SATISFACTION ABOUT THE TALKS AND RESULTS OF PRESIDENT FORD'S AND BREZHNEV'S MEETING AT VLADIVOSTOK. I AGREED, AND TOOK OCCASION TO REMARK THAT WHILE I WAS NOT A NEGOTIATOR, ONLY AN OBSERVER, I HAD ATTENDED SEVERAL MEETINGS OF THE SOVIET-U.S. TALKS ON SALT I AND, WHILE I WAS NOT AN EXPERT, I KNEW SUCH NEGOTIATIONS WERE COMPLEX, BUT THAT IT WAS THE POLICY OF THE U.S. THROUGH AGREEMENTS TO CONTROL, REDUCE AND LIMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPON SYSTEMS. I STATED THAT BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND U.S. HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO DESTROY EACH OTHER SEVERAL TIMES OVER, AND CONTROL OF SUCH WEAPONS IS A CHIEF CONCERN OF THE U.S.

7. I ALSO NOTED, WITHOUT SPECIFYING THEM, THAT EFFORTS WERE BEING MADE IN SEVERAL AREAS TO REDUCE ARMAMENTS AND THE DANGER OF WAR. STOPH RESPONDED RATHER GENERALLY, NOTING THE POSITION OF GDR IN THE DISARMAMENT TALKS AT VIENNA ON WHICH I DID NOT COMMENT AS I CONSIDER GDR POSITION FOLLOWS SOVIET LINE, A DIVERSION FROM CONCRETE PROGRESS. HE ALSO EMPHASIZED THE NECESSITY OF A EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE TO WHICH I DID NOT RESPOND.

8. STOPH OPENED UP THE SUBJECT OF DETENTE, WHICH HE SAID GDR APPROVED. I RESPONDED BY RECALLING THE INITIATIVES OF THE FRG AND GDR, MEETINGS BETWEEN LEADERS OF WESTERN AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION, FOLLOWED BY THE AGREEMENTS ESTABLISHED IN NEGOTIATIONS BY FORMER PRESIDENT NIXON AND SECRETARY KISSINGER, AND NOW PRESIDENT FORD-KISSINGER NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENTS. HE USED MY COMMENT ON FRG-GDR WHICH REFERRED TO EARLY INITIATIVES

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TO DIRECT ATTENTION TO THE PRESENT FRG-GDR TALKS, STATING THAT THE GDR HAD MADE CONCRETE PROPOSALS BUT THAT ANY AGREEMENT MUST NOT BE DISADVANTAGEOUS TO EITHER SIDE. HE THEN SAID, POINTEDLY, AND I CONSIDER DIRECTED TO U.S., THAT CHIEF INTEREST OF GDR WITH RESPECT TO U.S. WAS IN BI-LATERAL RELATIONS. I RESPONDED BY SAYING SUCH WAS U.S. POSITION AND U.S. HAD NO PURPOSE OF INTERFERING IN GDR INTERNAL MATTERS. AT THIS JUNCTURE, GDR NOTETAKER SCRIBBLED FURIOUSLY.

9 I EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THE U.S. AND GDR SHOULD ENTER, AS QUICKLY AS REASONABLY APPROPRIATE, IN NEGOTIATIONS ON SUBJECTS OF SEPTEMBER 4 AGREEMENTS AS THIS WOULD PROVIDE EVIDENCE TO THE U.S. AND, I WOULD HOPE, TO GDR OF PROGRESS IN OUR RELATIONS. HE EXPRESSED APPROVAL.

10 I TOLD HIM THAT I KNEW THAT HE AND FIRST SECRETARY ARE ALWAYS BUSILY ENGAGED AND DO NOT HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TO TALK TO AMBASSADORS, JUST AS SIMILARLY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE DO NOT HAVE SUCH TIME. NEVERTHELESS, I DESIRED TO MEET FIRST SECRETARY HONECKER AT AN EARLY DATE AND TO HAVE ACCESS TO HIM AND TO STOPH ON SUBJECTS OF IMPORTANT U.S. GDR CONCERN. HE RESPONDED GUARDEDLY, SAYING THAT A LIST OF MINISTERS WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE EMBASSY FOR INITIAL CALLS, THAT HE WOULD CONVEY MY REQUEST TO THE FIRST SECRETARY, AND THEN SAID HE EXPECTED THAT WE WOULD BE TALKING AT TIMES AND THAT I WOULD HAVE ACCESS TO HIM.

11. AS STATED, TALK WAS EASY, FRIENDLY, AND STOPH SPOKE SEVERAL TIMES OF GDR DESIRE TO BETTER U.S. GDR RELATIONS AND MUTUAL INTERESTS. NEVERTHELESS, I NOTED IN HIS USE OF SUBJECT OF CURRENT FRG-GDR TALKS AND EMPHASIS ON BILATERAL U.S. GDR RELATIONS THE POINTED IMPLICATION OF NON-INTERFERENCE BY U.S. IN FRG-GDR TALKS AND RELATIONS. I HAVE ALSO NOTED HIS REFERENCES TO GDR POSITION ON GENEVA DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS AND EUROPEAN SECURITY CONFERENCE, AS KNOWN SUPPORT OF SOVIET LINE.

12 THE EMBASSY IS SENDING BY AIRGRAM FULL TEXT OF MY FORMAL REMARKS, MY SHORT STATEMENT AT CEREMONY, AND STOPH'S FORMAL RESPONSE. I CONSIDER HIS FORMAL RESPONSE AS PARALLELING HIS STATEMENTS TO ME DURING OUR TALK.

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13. THE GDR WAS EXTREMELY INTERESTED IN THE EARLY ACCREDITATION OF U.S. AND GDR AMBASSADORS, AND I TOLD STOPH OF EFFORTS OF PRESIDENT AND DEPARTMENT TO RECEIVE GDR AMBASSADOR AT A VERY BUSY TIME. THE LIMITED TALKS BETWEEN EMBASSY STAFF AND GDR OPPOSITES HAVE BEEN CORRECT AND FRIENDLY, AS WAS MY TALK WITH STOPH, BUT I CONSIDER THERE IS YET NO FIRM EVIDENCE OF GDR POSITION TOWARD U.S. WE WILL OBSERVE CLOSELY FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS.COOPER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CREDENTIALS PRESENTATION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974BERLIN06180
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740372-0318
From: BERLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741217/aaaaanzb.tel
Line Count: 162
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28 MAR 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <28 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION WITH STOPH
TAGS: PFOR, GC, US, (STOPH), (COOPER)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005